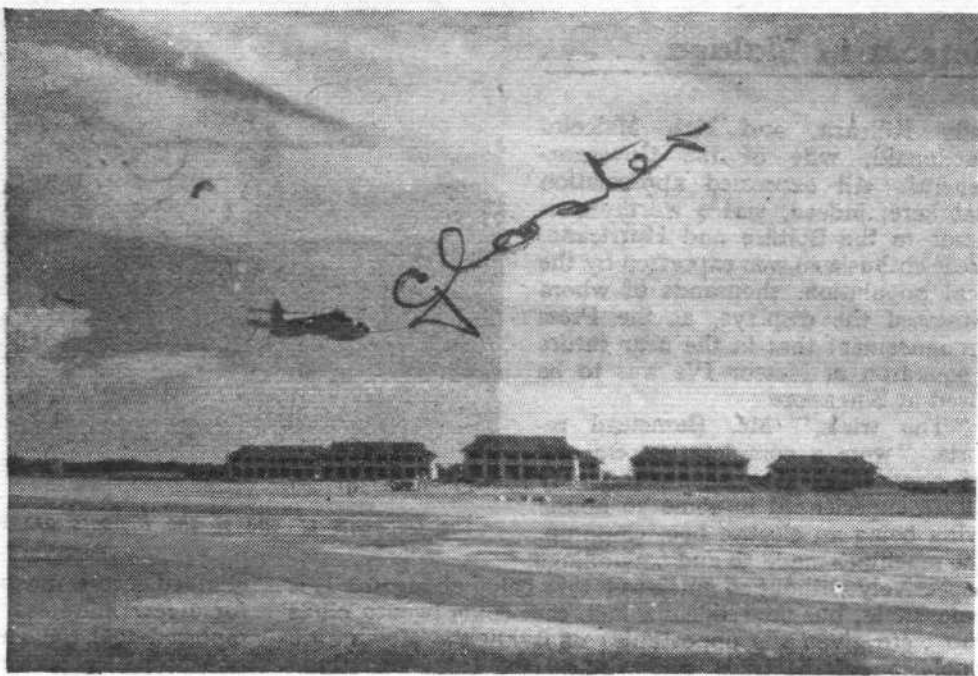


Meteors in Malaya

*A Gloster
Representative De-
scribes Recent Service
Trials*



One of the two short-span Mark IV Meteors at speed over Tengah airfield, some fifteen miles from Singapore.

MR. L. BUMSTEAD, of the Gloster Aircraft Company, Ltd., Mr. H. Gerrard, of Rolls-Royce, Ltd., and a party of four N.C.O.s from Air Ministry Department S.M.7, were lately responsible for erecting and preparing two Gloster Meteor IV fighters (two R-R. Derwent Vs) for tests in Malaya. We are indebted to Mr. Bumstead for an account of his experiences.

The home of the Meteors in the Singapore area was at Tengah, an R.A.F. station fifteen miles from the town and lying amid rubber and coconut trees. "For all its primitive setting," writes Mr. Bumstead, "Tengah is equipped with the most modern runways, hangars and quarters—a glimpse of the renewed defences at Singapore, and an assurance that no one will again walk in with impunity and take that island by force.

"Work did not commence immediately," he goes on, "as such items as the erection jigs, jacks, etc., had not arrived; however, after wasting a whole week we decided that they had been 'lost in the post' and proceeded with ropes, overhead gantries and a lot of grunts and groans. Despite the adverse conditions of working, due to temperature and lack of equipment, a fully assembled machine

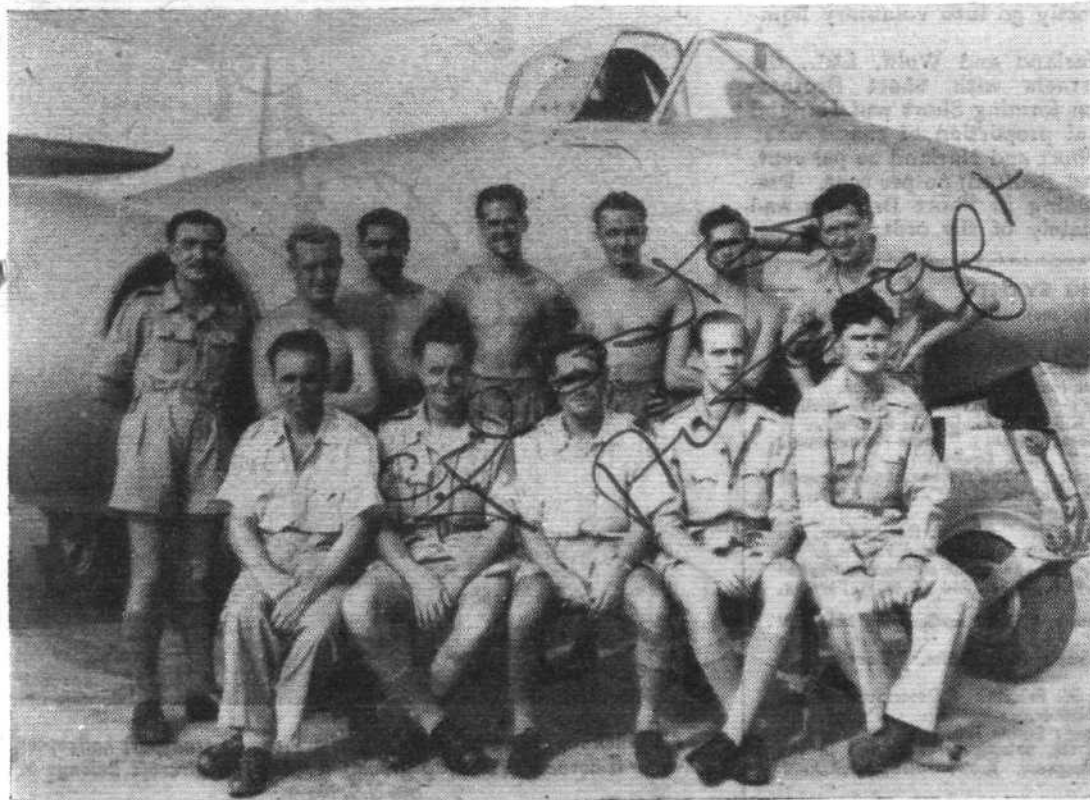
was ready for test flight within a week. This, coupled with the fact that only three of our party of six had previously worked on this type of aircraft, serves as a fitting tribute to our Chief Designer, especially so as the time mentioned for erection also included the uncrating and cleaning-off of anti-corrosive substances used for weather protection in transit.

Service Appreciation

"Both aircraft were subsequently flight-tested by W/C. Bird-Wilson, who expressed his pleasure concerning their handling qualities and announced them as O.K. for service, at the same time amply repaying our hours of checking and cross-checking with the simple words of acknowledgment, 'Whizzo, boys. A good job.' I should like here to pay a tribute to the 'Winger' who gave every assistance possible to us all and, being always ready with a cheery word, made working with him easy and pleasurable.

"The trials served a threefold purpose, for, apart from providing performance figures and 'airfield suitability' data, they brought to the people of Malaya a glimpse of things to come in a new era of air protection."

The Meteors were flown to every airfield within 500 miles of Singapore, one by W/C. Bird-Wilson, and one by F/L. Wilson, of No. 74 Squadron, Horsham St. Faith. Several air displays were given (reference to these has already been made in *Flight*) before such notabilities as Their Highnesses the Sultans of Salangor, Pahang, Trengganu, and Kalantan, Air Marshal Sir George and Lady Pirie, Sir Edward Gent, Lord and



Personnel responsible for erecting and flying the Meteors at Tengah. In the centre is W/C. Bird-Wilson; next to the Wing Commander (right) is F/L. Wilson and at the extreme right of the picture is Mr. Bumstead, Gloster representative.